

Changes to legislation: Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974, Cross Heading: Protection for spent alternatives to prosecution and ancillary circumstances is up to date with all changes known to be in force on or before 13 April 2024. There are changes that may be brought into force at a future date. Changes that have been made appear in the content and are referenced with annotations. (See end of Document for details) View outstanding changes

[^{F1}SCHEDULE 3

PROTECTION FOR SPENT ALTERNATIVES TO PROSECUTION: SCOTLAND

Textual Amendments

F1 Sch. 3 inserted (S.) (1.11.2011) by **Criminal Justice and Licensing (Scotland) Act 2010 (asp 13), ss. 109(4), 206(1); S.S.I. 2011/354, art. 2(1)**, Sch.

Protection for spent alternatives to prosecution and ancillary circumstances

- 3 (1) A person who is given an alternative to prosecution in respect of an offence is, from the time the alternative to prosecution becomes spent, to be treated for all purposes in law as a person who has not committed, been charged with or prosecuted for, or been given an alternative to prosecution in respect of, the offence.
- (2) Despite any enactment or rule of law to the contrary—
- (a) where an alternative to prosecution given to a person in respect of an offence has become spent, evidence is not admissible in any proceedings before a judicial authority exercising its jurisdiction or functions in Scotland to prove that the person has committed, been charged with or prosecuted for, or been given an alternative to prosecution in respect of, the offence,
 - (b) a person must not, in any such proceedings, be asked any question relating to the person's past which cannot be answered without acknowledging or referring to an alternative to prosecution that has become spent or any ancillary circumstances, and
 - (c) if a person is asked such a question in any such proceedings, the person is not required to answer it.
- (3) Sub-paragraphs (1) and (2) do not apply in relation to any proceedings—
- (a) for the offence in respect of which the alternative to prosecution was given, and
 - (b) which are not part of the ancillary circumstances.
- 4 (1) This paragraph applies where a person (“A”) is asked a question, otherwise than in proceedings before a judicial authority, seeking information about—
- (a) A's or another person's previous conduct or circumstances,
 - (b) offences previously committed by A or the other person, or
 - (c) alternatives to prosecution previously given to A or the other person.
- (2) The question is to be treated as not relating to alternatives to prosecution that have become spent or to any ancillary circumstances and may be answered accordingly.
- (3) A is not to be subjected to any liability or otherwise prejudiced in law because of a failure to acknowledge or disclose an alternative to prosecution that has become spent or any ancillary circumstances in answering the question.
- 5 (1) An obligation imposed on a person (“A”) by a rule of law or by the provisions of an agreement or arrangement to disclose any matter to another person does not extend to requiring A to disclose an alternative to prosecution (whether one given to A or another person) that has become spent or any ancillary circumstances.

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- (2) An alternative to prosecution that has become spent or any ancillary circumstances, or any failure to disclose an alternative to prosecution that has become spent or any ancillary circumstances, is not a ground for dismissing or excluding a person from any office, profession, occupation or employment, or for prejudicing the person in any way in any occupation or employment.
- 6 The Scottish Ministers may by order—
- (a) exclude or modify the application of either or both of sub-paragraphs (2) and (3) of paragraph 4 in relation to questions put in such circumstances as may be specified in the order,
 - (b) provide for exceptions from any of the provisions of paragraph 5 in such cases or classes of case, or in relation to alternatives to prosecution of such descriptions, as may be specified in the order
- 7 Paragraphs 3 to 5 do not affect—
- (a) the operation of an alternative to prosecution, or
 - (b) the operation of an enactment by virtue of which, because of an alternative to prosecution, a person is subject to a disqualification, disability, prohibition or other restriction or effect for a period extending beyond the time at which the alternative to prosecution becomes spent
- 8 (1) Section 7(2), (3) and (4) apply for the purpose of this Schedule as follows.
- (2) Subsection (2), apart from paragraphs (b) and (d), applies to the determination of any issue, and the admission or requirement of evidence, relating to alternatives to prosecution previously given to a person and to ancillary circumstances as it applies to matters relating to a person's previous convictions and circumstances ancillary thereto.
- (3) Subsection (3) applies to evidence of alternatives to prosecution previously given to a person and ancillary circumstances as it applies to evidence of a person's previous convictions and the circumstances ancillary thereto.
- (4) For that purpose, subsection (3) has effect as if—
- (a) a reference to subsection (2) or (4) of section 7 were a reference to that subsection as applied by this paragraph, and
 - (b) the words “or proceedings to which section 8 below applies” were omitted.
- (5) Subsection (4) applies for the purpose of excluding the application of paragraph 3.
- (6) For that purpose, subsection (4) has effect as if the words “(other than proceedings to which section 8 below applies)” were omitted.
- (7) References in the provisions applied by this paragraph to section 4(1) are to be read as references to paragraph 3.]
- [^{F29} (1) The powers conferred on the Scottish Ministers by—
- (a) paragraph 6, and
 - (b) section 7(4), as applied by paragraph 8,
- may be exercised to make provision relating to reserved matters and are not subject to the restrictions imposed by section 29(2)(b) or (c) of, or Schedule 4 to, the Scotland Act 1998.
- (2) In this paragraph, “reserved matters” has the same meaning as in the Scotland Act 1998.]

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Textual Amendments

- F2** Sch. 3 para. 9 inserted (13.4.2015) by [Criminal Justice and Courts Act 2015 \(c. 2\)](#), **ss. 19**, 95(1); [S.I. 2015/778](#), art. 3, Sch. 1 para. 15

Changes to legislation:

Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974, Cross Heading: Protection for spent alternatives to prosecution and ancillary circumstances is up to date with all changes known to be in force on or before 13 April 2024. There are changes that may be brought into force at a future date. Changes that have been made appear in the content and are referenced with annotations.

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Changes and effects yet to be applied to the whole Act associated Parts and Chapters:

- Act applied by [2017 anaw 2 s. 66\(10\)](#)

Whole provisions yet to be inserted into this Act (including any effects on those provisions):

- s. 5(2AA) inserted by [2020 asp 13 sch. 5 para. 2\(2\)](#)
- s. 5J(1)(ba) inserted by [2020 asp 13 sch. 5 para. 2\(8\)\(a\)](#)
- s. 5J(1A)(1B) inserted by [2020 asp 13 sch. 5 para. 2\(8\)\(b\)](#)
- s. 8A(2)(aa)-(ad) substituted for s. 8A(2)(a) by [2022 c. 32 Sch. 11 para. 2\(a\)](#)
- s. 8B(1A)-(1E) inserted by [2011 asp 1 s. 187\(2\)\(a\)](#)
- Sch. 3 para. 1(1)(aa)(ab) inserted by [2011 asp 1 s. 187\(3\)](#)